

Space, place and meaning in northern riverain Sudan

by

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The sea [river]*

Tonight my family greet me
The spirit of my forefathers emerges from the dreams of the river
And from the night of the sky

The city

I will return Sennar.....
Open – guards of Sennar – for the one who is returning tonight – the gates of the city
Open – for the one who is returning tonight – the gates of the city
Open the gates of the city

Are you a Bedouin?
No.

Are you from the land of the Africans?
No.

I belong to you
A lost one returning
Singing in one tongue
Praying in another

I belong to you
Your pain is mine
My spear is yours
A pagan who worships the land
A blind Sufi who worships miracles and the fire of the God

The dream

A dream? An imaginary tale? Truth?
What am I without this sound – this symbol?
It creates me
I create it
On the surface of a city – under the sun of the night – and a deep love

This study is dedicated to the Sudan – a broken country – in the hope for unity and peace

*The Sudanese refer to the River Nile as the sea.

These are excerpts from the poem, The return to Sennar, by Mohammed Abd AlHay, *Al A'mal al Shi'riyya alkamila*, 1999, Cairo, *Markaz aldirasat al sudaniyya*.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page No.
CHAPTER 1: THE STUDY PROPOSAL – THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING	1
1.1 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	1
1.2 THE MAIN HYPOTHESIS	1
1.3 THE DELIMITATIONS	1
1.4 THE DEFINITION OF TERMS	2
1.5 THE SOURCES, THEIR TREATMENT AND INTERPRETATION	3
1.6 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	5
1.7 THE SPECIFIC BASIS OF EACH SUB-PROBLEM	6
1.8 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY	8
1.9 THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE RESEARCHER	10
CHAPTER 2: PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE CONTEXTUAL STUDY OF ARCHITECTURE	 11
2.1 SUB-PROBLEM 1	11
2.2 HYPOTHESIS 1	11
2.3 OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 2	11
2.4 METHODS, SOURCES AND SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT	12
2.4.1 Eco-systems of paradigms	12
2.4.2 Dialectic processes, absolutism and relativism	13
2.4.3 Phenomenology of the body	15
2.4.4 Recapitulation	17
2.5 SOURCES, LANGUAGE, CLASSIFICATION AND INTERPRETATION	18
2.5.1 Information sources	18
2.5.2 Language	18
2.5.3 Artefacts and their classifications	19
2.5.4 The origins of artefacts	20
2.5.5 More on classification – the concept of multiple characteristics	21
2.5.6 Interpretation	23
2.5.7 Signs, symbols and interpreters	24
2.5.8 Recapitulation	26
2.6 INTERDISCIPLINARY INVESTIGATION: THE VALIDITY AND DIFFICULTIES OF USING A VARIETY OF SOURCES TO UNDERSTAND ARCHITECTURE	 26
2.6.1 The Architecture/Culture/Environment dialectic	27
2.6.2 Perception of climate	29
2.6.3 Perception of landscape	31
2.7 ARCHITECTURE DEBATED	32
2.7.1 Vernacular architecture	32
2.7.2 What is beauty?	34
2.7.3 African architecture	36
2.7.4 African spirituality	39
2.7.5 A Sudanese idiom	40
2.8 A RE-DEFINITION OF ARCHITECTURE	42
2.9 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	45
CHAPTER 3: AN ECO-SYSTEMIC CONSTRUCT OF NORTHERN RIVERAIN SUDAN	 47
3.1 SUB PROBLEM 2	47
3.2 HYPOTHESIS 2	47
3.3 OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 3	47
3.4 THE CONTEXT: ITS HISTORY AND ITS VALIDITY AS AN AREA OF STUDY	 47
3.5 RECURRING THEMES IN THE LITERATURE ON THE REGION	57
3.5.1 Social conscience, religion and ethics	58
3.5.2 Elaborate social interaction systems	60

3.5.3	Complex and intricate kinship system	61
3.5.4	The slave trade, racism and political power	62
3.5.5	Trade routes	63
3.5.6	The harshness of the environment, the desiccated landscape and the poor economy	66
3.5.7	Sudanese Sufism	68
3.5.8	The <i>shaykh's</i> cult	69
3.6	IDENTITY OF A PEOPLE: WHO THEN ARE THE NORTHERN SUDANESE?	70
3.7	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	73
CHAPTER 4: PEOPLE AND PLACE: THE IDENTITY OF THE REGION THROUGH SELECTED ARTEFACTS		75
4.1	SUB PROBLEM 3	75
4.2	HYPOTHESIS 3	75
4.3	OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 4	75
4.4	GENDER ROLES AND BODY IMAGES	76
4.5	DRESS FORM AND MEANING	80
4.5.1	Conformity, identity and group affiliation	80
4.5.1 i)	Conformity – <i>albas al bi'jib al nas</i>	80
4.5.1 ii)	Identity – <i>al shilookh</i>	81
4.5.1 iii)	Group affiliation	82
4.5.2	Clothing as environmental control	82
4.5.3	<i>Sutraa</i> and <i>hijab</i> : the <i>tob</i>	83
4.5.4	Wrapping containers, wrapping bodies	85
4.5.5	Dress forms: history and origins	85
4.5.6	Attitudes to mechanization and material as economic currency	87
4.5.7	Clothing and associated meanings	87
4.5.8	Clothing and national identity	88
4.6	CLOTHES, BUILDINGS AND SPACE USE	89
4.7	DETERMINANTS OF HOUSE FORM AND LAYOUT	90
4.7.1	Social structure and spatial articulation: hierarchical differentiation in the physical environment – changes through time	91
4.7.2	Social themes concerning gender roles and their impact on house layout	94
4.7.3	Connotations of the word <i>bayt</i>	95
4.7.4	Privacy and the individual's use of space	96
4.7.5	Time as a structuring element in place making – nomadic cycles	97
4.7.6	The cardinal directions and spatial perception	101
4.7.7	Symbolic relationship between burial and dwelling	102
4.7.8	The courtyards, the streets and the public spaces	104
4.8	SHAYKHS, VILLAGES, TOWNS AND TOMBS	106
4.8.1	Islam and Sufism	107
4.8.2	Bearers of the new religion, Nile dwellers and teachers of Islam	108
4.8.3	The Nuclei of Urban Centres: the Religious Centres	111
4.8.3 i)	al-Dammar	113
4.8.3 ii)	Hillat Khojali	115
4.8.3 iii)	Wad Hassuna	115
4.8.3 iv)	al-Fijayja	116
4.8.3 v)	al-Fara'/al-Qubba	117
4.8.3 vi)	Kadbas	117
4.8.3 vii)	Um Dubban	118
4.8.3 viii)	al-Sanniyya	118
4.8.4	Descriptions of religious centres	118
4.9	OMDURMAN	122
4.9.1	The morphology of Omdurman compared to the Medina typology	126

4.10	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	129
CHAPTER 5: MAKING VISIBLE THE INVISIBLE: THE INTANGIBLE CONSTRUCT		134
5.1	SUB PROBLEM 4	134
5.2	HYPOTHESIS 4	134
5.3	OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 5	134
5.4	THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MEANING OF A PHENOMENON	135
5.5	SOCIAL SYSTEMS	136
5.5.1	The <i>Fareeq</i> community network	136
5.5.2	The nuclear family	137
5.5.3	Segregation of the sexes	138
5.5.4	Personal appearance as a form of gender differentiation	139
5.5.5	Milestones and activities	139
5.5.6	Social sanction – maintaining social order	140
5.6	ECONOMIC SYSTEMS	140
5.7	STATUS AND POWER SYSTEMS	142
5.7.1	Kushite and Meroitic eras	143
5.7.2	Christian era	144
5.7.3	Arab penetration	144
5.7.4	Funj era	145
5.8	RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS	147
5.8.1	Protection from the spirits	147
5.8.1 i)	The Quran	147
5.8.1 ii)	White and shiny things	147
5.8.1 iii)	<i>Bakhour</i> incense/substances of strong smell or taste	147
5.8.1 iv)	Loud sounds	148
5.8.1 v)	Sacrifices and food types	148
5.8.1 vi)	Protection in numbers and words	148
5.8.2	Rituals	149
5.8.2 i)	Visits to burial places	149
5.8.2 ii)	Flags and colours	149
5.8.2 iii)	More on colour	151
5.8.2 iv)	Rituals at the river bank	151
5.9	APPROPRIATION OF SPACES FOR RITUALS	152
5.9.1	Death	153
5.9.2	Marriage	153
5.9.3	Religious ritual and corresponding space: the <i>halaqa</i>	154
5.9.4	<i>Zar</i>	155
5.10	KNOWLEDGE AND CREATIVE SYSTEMS	155
5.10.1	Attitudes to knowledge and creativity	155
5.10.2	Literature	156
5.10.3	Language and words	158
5.11	THEMES AND PATTERNS THAT DETERMINE PLACE-MAKING ACTIVITIES	160
5.11.1	Cultural space/natural space	160
5.11.2	Levels of control/Agents of control	162
5.12	INTANGIBLE VALUES AND PHYSICAL/SPATIAL IMPLICATIONS	164
5.12.1	Origins of built artefacts in the northern riverain region	164
5.12.2	Intangible/abstract imitation of original forms	165
5.13	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	167
CHAPTER 6: A THEORETICAL, INTERPRETATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY OF SUDANESE ARCHITECTURE		169
6.1	SUB PROBLEM 5	169
6.2	HYPOTHESIS 5	169
6.3	OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 6	169
6.4	TOWARDS AN INTERPRETATIVE FRAMEWORK	169

6.5	A COMPARISON BETWEEN CULTURES OF VARIOUS HISTORICAL ERAS	170
6.6	AN ALTERNATIVE INTERPRETATION OF SUDANESE HISTORY	181
6.7	NORTHERN SUDAN IN THE CONTEXT OF SUDAN AND AFRICA	183
6.8	SUDANESE ARCHITECTURE	184
6.9	AN ECO-SYSTEMIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY OF SUDANESE ARCHITECTURE	185
6.10	CONCLUSIONS	186
CHAPTER 7: RECAPITULATION, ACHIEVEMENTS, DELIMITATIONS AND COUNTER-ARGUMENTS, CONCLUSION AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH		187
7.1	RECAPITULATION	187
7.2	ACHIEVEMENTS	189
7.3	DELIMITATIONS AND COUNTER-ARGUMENTS	191
7.4	CONCLUSIONS: INTERFACE: ISLAM MEETS AFRICA	192
7.5	OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS	195
LIST OF REFERENCES		198
SUMMARY English		207
Afrikaans		208
Arabic		209
GLOSSARY		210

LIST OF FIGURES

		Page No.
Fig. 2.1	Diagram generated by the author from writing of Klinck	17
Figs.2.2 and 2.3	Rudimentary structures in the Gezira region, the Sudan	41
Fig. 3.1	Nubia and Kush	48
Fig. 3.2	Historical episodes	49
Fig. 3.3	The three Christian kingdoms	50
Fig. 3.4	Rough boundaries of the Sudan	54
Fig. 3.5	Map from Daly and Forbes	55
Fig. 3.6	A diagrammatic representation of the region under study and its surroundings	57
Fig. 3.7	Goods being traded to and from Shendi	64
Fig. 3.8	Trade routes between the major towns of the northern Sudan	65
Fig. 3.9	Routes of Muslim penetration into the Sudan	68
Fig. 4.1 and 4.2	Unidentified Sudanese man and woman in 1920	80
Fig. 4.3	Man and woman in traditional attire	83
Fig. 4.4	A typical pattern in house design: <i>qurfatayn makhloofat</i> .	95
Fig. 4.5	A modern interpretation of the <i>qurfatayn makhloofat</i>	95
Fig. 4.6	Old Shendi house	99
Fig. 4.7	Indoor rooms/Outdoor rooms in a Shendi House	100
Fig. 4.8	Sun directions and shadow pattern on a summer morning	100
Fig. 4.9	The cardinal directions and associated symbolism	102
Fig. 4.10	A typical northern Sudanese grave	104
Fig. 4.11	Comparison between the morphology of Sudanese towns and villages and that of other Muslim cities	105
Fig. 4.12	The same outside space becomes a series of different settings	106
Fig. 4.13	Places mentioned in the text: map of North East Sudan	109
Figs.4.14 & 4.15	Villages on the Khartoum-Shendi route	111
Fig. 4.16	Khalwa boy dipping a reed pen into ink for writing sections of the Quran on a <i>loh</i> (wooden board)	119
Fig. 4.17	Dervishes in a procession in Khartoum	119
Fig. 4.18	"The domed gubba and minaret of Sheikh Gharieb Allah"	120
Fig. 4.19	Qubba of Shaykh Idris wad Arbab	121
Fig. 4.20	Mahdi's Tomb, Omdurman	124

Fig. 4.21	The Khalifa House	125
Fig. 4.22	The <i>Qubba</i> viewed from the roof of the Khalifa House	125
Fig. 4.23	Morphology of the city of Omdurman during the Mahdiyya	128
Fig. 4.24	Aerial photograph of Omdurman taken around 1930	128
Fig. 4.25	Aerial photograph of al Fashir taken in 1916	129
Fig 5.1	The <i>Fareeq</i> within a village setting	137
Fig. 5.2	The movement patterns of women in a neighbourhood.	139
Fig. 5.3	Overlaps between the different age groups	140
Fig. 5.4	The two dimensions of status during the Funj era.	146
Fig. 5.5	Flags at a graveyard	149
Fig. 5.6	Flags at a celebration of <i>Moolid</i>	150
Fig. 5.7	Painting by Ahmed Shibrain	159
Figs.6.1 & 6.2	The topography of Meroe and the layout of the town	174
Fig. 6.3	Castle at Meroe from the later Funj era	174
Fig. 6.4	Church in Old Dongola	180

LIST OF TABLES

	Page No.	
Table 2.1	Constituents of the tangible culture of a people.	20
Table 2.2	Codes that make up a cultural context.	25
Table 2.3	Determinants of form, organisation and space use.	28
Table 2.4	The two forms of social structure and their characteristics.	30
Table 2.5	The three domains of dwelling and agents of control.	41
Table 3.1	Historical timeline.	53
Table 4.1	Gender differences (Vagenes, 1998: 92).	78
Table 4.2	Gender perceptions, roles and social/cultural domains present in the northern riverain area.	79
Table 4.3	Comparison between Omdurman and other African cities influenced by Islam.	127
Table 5.1	Tangible and intangible culture: Construct of aspects of culture relevant to the context, explored through various themes and patterns.	135
Table 5.2	<i>Schema</i> of the relationship between this world and the other world: based on Levi-Strauss in Leach (1974: 76).	160
Table 5.3	<i>Schema</i> representing the relationship between this world and the other world for the Northern riverain Sudanese people. .	161
Table 5.4	Levels and control in the northern Sudanese environmental setting.	162
Table 5.5	Origins of built form according to Quatremère de Quincy.	164
Table 6.1	A comparison between cultures of the different eras in Northern riverain Sudan.	171
Table 6.2	Space and place in northern riverain Sudan: a framework for teaching and research.	185
Table 7.1	Sub-problems, hypothesis and outcomes.	188
Table 7.2	Themes particular to the northern riverain context and aspects for special consideration.	189-90